



Be on the safe side

Be a safety rep and make your workplace safer



We know that being safe while you are at work matters to you. That's why UNISON has thousands of health and safety reps across the UK working hard to keep you safe and healthy at work.

We know that while you are focused on dealing with the current crisis caused by coronavirus – health and safety has never been more important.

You may have been asked to return to work, but think it's too early, that you aren't ready or that your employer hasn't got everything in place to keep you safe.

Or you may have been working throughout the crisis and are concerned about more staff coming back, or you may be seeing hazards or unsafe practices that worry you.

You might have noticed problems like this, but what if you have ideas for changes that will help keep you and your colleagues safe?

If you want the chance to get your ideas across and help make your workplace safer then why not think about becoming one of our health and safety reps? That way you could get those ideas listened to, and make a real difference for you, your colleagues and service users too.

Because without health and safety reps, our workplaces are less safe and less healthy.

We don't expect you to be an expert from day one, we will train you in every aspect of the role so you will be able to:

- talk to members about their health and safety issues and deal with those issues for them
- investigate potential hazards
- work with your employer to improve safety in the workplace and deal with specific problems that arise at work
- show more people that UNISON is the union that gets things done and encourage them to join us and make us stronger.

And our support doesn't end when you've finished your training. Other safety reps, branch officials and UNISON staff will be there with advice while you support your colleagues at work. We have webpages, booklets and briefings, support for safety reps on UNISON's Organising Space and a Facebook page too so there's always somewhere to go for help.

Our aim is to have at least one health and safety rep everywhere UNISON members work – including colleges, care homes, call centres, schools, libraries, town halls and

hospitals. Those reps are elected by our members and, once elected, they have the legal right to training and the time to help improve the safety of people at work.

They have those legal rights because employers have obligations in law to ensure the health, safety and welfare of their employees. So the law is on your side! You don't have to be a legal expert, though – much of what you do is common sense, and our training will help you deal with most things that come up. Plus, there are other reps at branch, regional and national level that are available if you need advice.

It's an important role, and most employers value the work done by health and safety reps and work in partnership with them to make workplaces safer.

If you are interested in finding out more about what is involved in being a health and safety rep you will find more information at www.unison.org.uk/SafeSide

You can also have a chat with your UNISON branch. If you don't know how to get in touch, you will find contact details in our branch finder at <https://branches.unison.org.uk>

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Not in UNISON? Join today at join.unison.org.uk